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ABSTRACT

One of 52 theoretical papers on school crime and its relation to poverty, this chapter addresses itself to the identification and training of appropriate personnel to implement intervention programs that prevent disruptive, delinquent acts within communities in general and schools in particular. Two models are presented to prepare teachers both to deal effectively with disruptive behavior and to increase the academic skills of the student who exhibits such behavior. The first model is a preservice model that can be implemented at the state level and may be used in the training of crisis-intervention "specialists." The second model is a local inservice model, that can be introduced into a local school system, involving available personnel. (Author/MLF)

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A RATIONALE AND MODEL FOR THE TRAINING OF EDUCATIONAL SPECIALISTS TO WORK WITH DISRUPTIVE YOUTH

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A paper from
"Theoretical Perspectives on School Crime"

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Rationale

Problem Definition

The problem of dealing with the disruptive and alienated student in the classrooms of our schools has been increasingly placed before educators over the past decade. The questions of how to deal with these students and whose responsibility it should be to deal with them remain unanswered. It is to the latter question that this paper addresses itself, i.e., the identification and training of appropriate personnel to implement intervention programs which prevent disruptive, delinquent acts within our communities in general and our schools in particular.

Present teacher-training systems have been less than successful in preparing today's educators adequately to respond to the disruptive and delinquent population. Most teachers lack the diagnostic and remedial teaching skills which are necessary to cope with the learning disabilities often associated with acting-out behavior. Nor have they been equipped with the crisis-intervention skills needed to defuse the hostility and anxiety present in disruptive action.

The problem, then, is to develop training models which will prepare teachers both to deal effectively with disruptive behavior and to increase the academic skills of the student who exhibits such behavior. Two models will

be presented. The first model will be a preservice model, which can be implemented at the state level and which may be used in the training of crisis-intervention "specialists." The second model is a local in-service model, which can be introduced into a local school system, involving available personnel.

Prior to presentation of the models, it is necessary to explore relevant data in an effort to form theoretical constructs for programming.

Needs Assessment

The general problem of disruptive and delinquent behavior is well documented. The 1975 report from the United States Senate entitled "Crime in Our Schools--A Report Card in Violence" draws a dismal picture. Between 1970 and 1973 there was a startling increase in serious crimes within the walls of the nation's schools. The preliminary findings of the subcommittee are as follows:

Homicides increased by 18.5 percent;
Rapes and attempted rapes increased by 40.1 percent;
Robberies increased by 36.7 percent;
Assaults on students increased by 85.3 percent;
Assaults on teachers increased by 77.4 percent;
Burglaries of schools increased by 11.8 percent;
Drug and alcohol offenses on school property increased by 37.5 percent;
Drop-outs increased by 11.7 percent.

These figures deal only with serious reported crimes and not with the escalating discipline problems of disobedience and disruption which teachers face daily. The cost of

vandalism to the average school district is over $55,000 per year (U. S. Congress, 1975). On a national level, this cost has approximated $100 million annually (Goldmeier, 1974).

The National Education Association (NEA) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) have gone on record as ranking the problem of school discipline among the most serious facing their members. The Gallup Poll conducted for the Kettering Foundation indicates that this problem is of the greatest concern to parents and teachers alike (Gallup, 1977). Owen Kiernan of NASSP, in testimony before Senator Bayh's Committee on Juvenile Delinquency (1975), has pleaded for some action at the highest levels of government to aid educators in their attempts to deal with the problem. Many professional organizations and school districts have demonstrated their concern by establishing task forces to seek ways of establishing programs to deal with the problem of disruptive youth in the schools. It is evident that educators desperately want help, training, and support in dealing with what has become an overwhelming problem.

Role of the School in Prevention

The rationale for the development of a treatment and preventive program which is school-centered is twofold. First, research in the area of juvenile delinquency points

to the critical role of the school in both causality and prevention. Polk and Schafer (1972) and Wenk (1974) have summarized the situation as one in which poor school performance is closely related to delinquency. Although this relationship is strongest for offenders of lower socioeconomic status, the chances of delinquent behavior by youth from white-collar homes increases with school failure (Winslow, 1968, p. 90). This increased delinquency-proneness points to the importance of school success in the life of a child. This is not to imply that it is the only variable in delinquent outcome, but that it ranks very high in order of significance. As a result of a longitudinal study, Elliot and Voss (1974) found support for the position that "...the school is the critical generating milieu for delinquency" (p. 203). This position is congruent with other research (Schafer & Polk, 1967), but goes a step further in isolating school failure as a powerful predictor of delinquency. It has been shown to be the most predictive for males, whereas parental rejection was more predictive of delinquency for females. However, for both sexes, academic failure was shown to be significant and contributory to later delinquent involvement. In effect, delinquent and disruptive behavior may be a method of dealing with the loss of self-esteem and the social stigma which are consequences of school failure (Elliot, 1974).

Not only can the school be a causal and contributory factor in juvenile delinquency, but it is within the school setting that early detection is most possible and where, therefore, preventive action can begin. As a result of a study of delinquency in Wayne County, Michigan, Hubert G. Locke (1972) found the following relationship between early detection and later criminality:

> Most youths who begin their careers in crime as juveniles and who graduate to more serious criminal offenses as adults are persons who, by a number of formal and informal processes, could be identified at a relatively early stage in their careers, as potential delinquents or adult criminals: yet little if anything is done at their early stage to intervene or to attempt to constructively dissuade such persons from a life of crime. (p. 3)

Failure starts early and is detectible even in kindergarten, more visibly within the schools than anywhere else. This early failure results in a "failure" identity which can become chronic in that it leads to antisocial pathways in an attempt to preserve identity (Glasser, 1971). The authors' experiences in the public school system, working with delinquent and delinquent-prone youth, indicate that many of the students failed first grade and typically received the minimal passing grades for the remainder of their school careers. It has also been the writers' experience that this failure was not only pervasive but also traumatic, and that it often resulted in an ideological "demonization" of all school personnel which is self-fulfilling and at times self-serving. Following an unprovoked

confrontation with a teacher, one such student explained, "You don't know how much I hate them; I was so bad I flunked first grade and got kicked out of every school I went to." These personal observations are supported by research findings:

> A significant number of individuals continually receive punishments rather than rewards at report card time....Report cards as they are presently administered in most public schools have created a group of students who are the "perpetual losers," deprived of any taste of the academic honors that are the major official rewards in schools. (McPartland & McDill, 1975, p. 17)

Some students indicate problems of a hostile and aggressive nature only in relation to school authority. They function well in employment situations and are free from authority conflicts there. However, with others, the acting out pervades every area of their lives.

In addition to the reciprocal causality of the school and delinquency, there is a pragmatic rationale for centering a prevention program within the school system. Adolescents spend a significant amount of their waking hours in school and are most accessible in this setting. In addition, many of the effects of delinquent behavior are manifest within the walls of the school, i.e., disruption is often perpetrated against the school in acts of "vindication and symbolic vandalism" (Goldmeier, 1974).

Both public and private agencies have had limited impact on the problem of juvenile delinquency. Private

agencies in particular have chosen as a matter of policy to work exclusively, or at least disproportionately, with a middle-class clientele (Locke, 1972). If an intervention program is not introduced within the school system, a continuation of the pattern of increased disruption within the schools and the community at large is certain.

Role of the Teacher in Prevention

The 1970 Joint Commission on Mental Health of Children urges that teacher training be restructured "...to deal with the wide range of behaviour in children so that more can be maintained in the classroom..." (Swift & Back, 1973, p. 1). Because delinquency so often coincides with a disadvantaged background, there is a great need for teachers trained to deal with students lacking in many of the skills prevalent in the larger culture. This calls for increasing the teachers' awareness of subcultural attitudes toward learning and of the learning ability of students belonging to that subculture. Students can sense when a teacher cares about their learning (Hilmar, 1972), and experience shows that there are certain teachers who consistently experience classroom disruption. The authors have also observed that there are other teachers who rarely have problems even with the "troublesome" youth of the school. When students talk about the latter, words like "trust," "fairness," and "okay" are used frequently. In addition, students talk

about such teachers with a sense of fondness which they know is mutual. This is confirmed by conversations with the teachers, who showed genuine interest in the same youth considered the scourge of the school.

How do most teachers perceive "disadvantaged" students? Evidence suggests that they, including teachers from similar backgrounds, view them as lazy and unmotivated (Hilmar, 1972). With this in mind, Ornstein suggests that "Students behave according to what they perceive to be their role. If they are expected to be subservient or inferior, they will behave accordingly, but they will ultimately rebel" (Hilmar, 1972, p. 437). A now-classic study by Rosenthal showed that teachers' attitudes effected a significant increase in IQ scores when they were "misinformed" that the students had great potential (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1966). Conversely, the negative perception of delinquents by teachers (Peters, 1969) can result in the acceptance of a deviant role (Clinard, 1963; Erikson, 1968, p. 88). A change in teacher response and attitudes is needed if alienated and delinquent youth are to be dealt with in the classroom. An emphatic approach requires that the teacher see the learning situation through the eyes of the student. This involves an awareness of the student's life context, including the problem of the neighborhood in which he lives. Modification of curriculae to meet the special needs of the student and capitalize on strengths rather than reinforce weaknesses is suggested.

Parent conferences can be held in the student's home and parental contact should not be limited to problem situations (Hilmar, 1972).

Depersonalization of the school is evidenced by the increase in school size and its correlation with increased delinquent activity (McPartland & McDill, 1975, p. 26). There is certainly a case for smaller school units; but this attitude of apathy and uninvolvement permeates the entire school system. "Teachers have to get involved with students; it's critical for the whole procedure. Teachers have to care for children, and they have to show that they care" (Glasser, 1971). Glasser distinguishes this involvement from emotional entanglement, in which one loses the ability to work "realistically." This kind of involvement with students demands the development of those interpersonal skills needed in dealing with the disruptive students. Most teachers in the school system lack these skills (Glasser, 1971). Certainly there is a need to attend to teacher training which confronts the fact of the increased number of alienated and disruptive youth in the nation's schools.

Description

Experience and research indicate that the most effective teacher-training programs, in-service and pre-service, have the following hallmarks:

The teachers are self-selected.
The program is action-oriented.
The competencies presented are seen to be needed.
Experience/training is acquired by pragmatic means while working on actual cases and, where possible, in real situations.

Assessment of the needs of the client population indicates that the models presented should have three general thrusts: diagnostic and remedial, crisis-intervention, and knowledge of the community.

Diagnostic and Remedial

Numerous studies have indicated that specific learning disabilities are found in a significant number of children who display disruptive and delinquent behavior (Curry & Grignano, 1974; Berman, 1974). These disabilities lead to great difficulties in mastering basic skills such as reading and arithmetic. There is a resulting alienation from, and conflict with, schools as institutions, teachers as helping agents, and education as a viable goal. This cyclic and self-destructive pattern is represented in the simplified paradigm in Figure 1. Thus the teacher must be able to diagnose (in the radical sense, i.e., to know thoroughly) the nature of the learning disability, particularly as it relates to reading and math, and to write, implement, and revise prescriptions to remedy the problems.

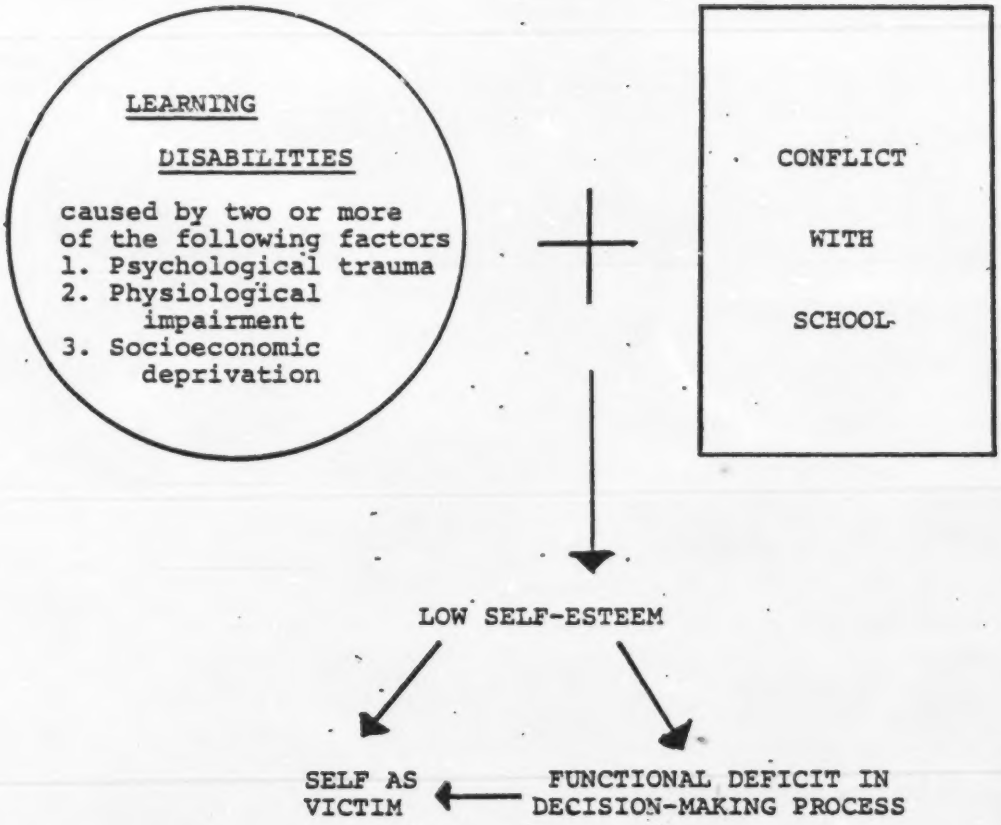


Figure 1. Pattern of alienation in children with learning disabilities.

Crisis-Intervention Skills

Both the low self-esteem and the related inappropriate decision-making process which leads to conflict with teacher, school, and community must be dealt with while--and often before--the learning deficiencies are being dealt with. Fritz Redl (1971) urges the use of the crisis-intervention in the schools for the purpose of intervention in and assessment of difficult and problem situations. According to Redl (1971), "Good education is not enough for children who hate.... Their basic ego disturbances must be repaired first." The emotional overlay in most disruptive acts must be dealt with firmly and purposefully by whatever approach is necessary. The crisis-intervention skills should be developed as part of the training model.

Community Knowledge

The terms of reference and the value structure of the disruptive person have their origins in the community in which he or she lives. The agencies and institutions with which that person comes into conflict are part of that community. The family, the school, the peer group, and the welfare and criminal justice systems are forces which affect such a youth. In order to deal effectively with the problems of the disruptive youth it is therefore necessary to have a realistic and pragmatic knowledge of both the formal and informal structures in the local community and

a recognition of the political power structure involved. A direct contact with such influences is an essential part of the teacher's role as advocate.

The three "thrusts," or areas of concern, are not independent. Nor are they mutually exclusive. They are simply diagrammed in Figure 2.

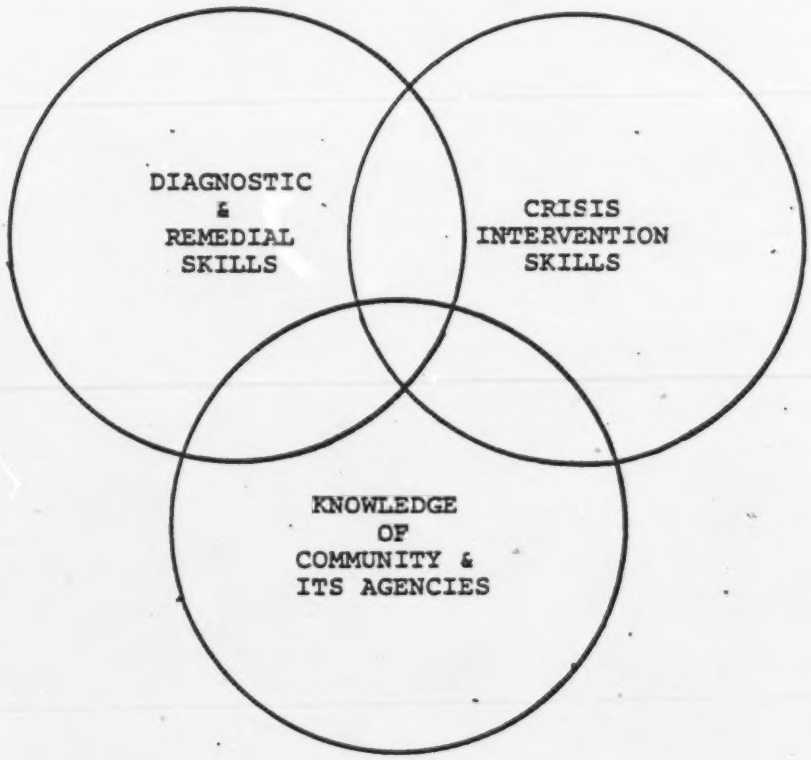


Figure 2. Areas of concern for teacher-training programs.

Purpose and Objectives

The purpose of the training models presented would be to prepare teachers, via preservice and in-service programs, to work with those students who can be described as (a) disruptive, (b) delinquent, (c) socially maladjusted, and/or (d) exhibiting dysfunctional behavior. Upon completion of the training the teacher should possess suitable personality characteristics, maturity, knowledge, and skills which enable him or her to work effectively with educational, correctional, social, and other agencies engaged in the rehabilitation of members of the target population.

The models include field experiences and the successful completion of supervised practica in conjunction with the appropriate academic activities.

Objectives of the training programs are:

1. The teacher shall be prepared to identify and annotate psychosocial and academic behavior through a working knowledge of:

    a. educational and achievement patterns of identified delinquent and offender populations;

    b. social and cultural forces which influence the self-concepts of alienated and delinquent persons; and

c. informal and formal academic, social, and psychological assessment techniques appropriate to the identification of the needs of this population.

2. The teacher shall be prepared to develop a personalized intervention plan in conjunction with the student for the purpose of preventing antisocial behavior and/or recidivism. Essential competencies include:

a. working knowledge of the structure and process of the public school system, the juvenile justice system, and social and welfare agencies in the communities;

b. ability to serve in an advocacy role to provide students with a continuity of helping services;

c. ability to coordinate or contribute to a team effort of allied agencies for the purpose of attaining rehabilitation; and

d. ability to provide effective ongoing communication, when appropriate, with the student's significant others.

3. The teacher shall be prepared to coordinate appropriate remediation through direct intervention, referral, or a combination of these.

A. Knowledge Criteria

1. Knowledge of teaching strategies which are effective in increasing the basic literative and computational skills of students who are educationally disadvantaged in these areas.

2. Understanding of the culture of poverty and of the social forces which encourage and/or support delinquent and antisocial behavior.

3. Knowledge of the types of behavior and attitudes which are considered to be developmental and/or dysfunctional in adolescents.

4. Knowledge of the types of learning disabilities which are likely to retard learning.

5. Knowledge of the criminal justice system, including its component parts (i.e., police, probation, and courts).

6. Understanding of the rationales and techniques used in counseling delinquent populations.

7. Knowledge of the usual responsibilities of the teacher/practitioner, i.e., planning and implementing teaching strategies and the evaluation of learning outcomes.

8. Understanding of the fundamentals of appropriate curriculum construction, including approaches to the individualization of instruction and the selection of curriculum materials which enhance the self-image of the student.

9. Knowledge of the philosophical assumptions underlying educational practice and process, with specific emphasis upon the efforts of society to provide stability and continuity to life through provision of institutional measures.

10. Understanding of the processes whereby the roles of school, family, and community affect the behavior in the disruptive and delinquent.

B. Teacher Behavior Criteria

1. Demonstration of teaching strategies which raise the basic literature and computational skills of students who are educationally disadvantaged in these areas.

2. Ability to respond to adolescents who exhibit patterns which are antisocial and which foster delinquency.

3. Capacity to cope effectively with behavioral dysfunctions in adolescents.

4. Skills in remediation of learning difficulties.

5. Capacity to function in concert with those who perform other roles in the social remediation process in closed correctional settings.

6. Ability to perform auxillary counseling functions under the supervision of a qualified counselor.

7. Demonstration of the ability to plan, implement, and evaluate teacher/learner strategies.

8. Ability to select and design learning materials and sequences which facilitate individualization of instruction and which enhance the self-image of the client.

9. Demonstration of the adoption of acceptable personal philosophy of remedial education.

10. Capacity to participate effectively as part of a team devoted to social restoration of alienated youth.

11. Capacity to work with delinquency-prone youth in developing positive attitudes in an open community setting.

Program Description--Model A

This suggested model is an intensive training program at the graduate level conducted by an Institute of Higher Education (IHE), in cooperation with selected local school districts where significant numbers of disruptive youth can be identified. It is suggested that a State Department of Education might consider the establishment of a separate professional credential to be awarded upon successful completion of the training program.

The recommended length of the program is 15 months and would consist of preservice, in-service, and terminal phases.

In the 16-week preservice phase the teacher/students would spend half of each working day in schools with teachers who have been identified as very effective in "turning on

the turned-off youth." Here they could develop their diagnostic, remedial, and crisis-intervention competencies under the supervision of that teacher and the University specialist. In the late afternoon and evening their time would be spent working with the community agencies, dividing their efforts between involvement with the community centers and assisting in the police/probation office and the juvenile detention facilities.

Each afternoon they would meet with IHE instructors in seminars to discuss their on-the-job experiences and problems. Much of this time should be spent in role-playing, case study, and developing problem-solving, diagnostic, and remedial skills. Resource people might be used, including probation officers, street workers, inmates, drug counselors, addicts, juvenile court judges, institutional administrators, and teachers. Visits to court, juvenile correctional facilities, drug centers, etc., would be included. Emphasis would be upon the development of initial diagnostic, remedial, and crisis-intervention skills (see "Purpose and Objectives").

The second phase--the core of the program--will be a one-year internship as a teacher in an appropriate school setting. During this time the teachers would be visited at least biweekly by IHE staff with expertise in diagnostic and remedial teaching, curriculum, and crisis-intervention. Seminars and tutorials, with emphasis on solving specific

problems, could be held on site rather than at the IHE.

The final phase of the program would be a 12-week integrating experience on campus. The interns would meet to evaluate both the program and their experiences and to add more theoretical structure to the practical experience of their internship.

The teachers should be selected on the basis of emotional stability, flexibility, and commitment to youth. It is emphasized that both the preservice component and the field placement are rigorous, involving a 60-hour-per-week program, and that the in-service placement would expose them to traumatic, threatening, and emotionally draining experiences.

The teachers selected should have a multiplicity of backgrounds, both socially and academically. A major strength of the program ought to be the elan and group sense which evolves and which can be developed by regular social gatherings as well as seminar meetings and common preservice experiences. This should continue through the in-service phase, despite any geographical distance separating the respective job sites.

Instructional personnel for the program should be drawn from the following fields, depending upon availability and expertise:

Social and Emotional Disturbance
Learning Disabilities
Media and Technology

Remedial Diagnostic and Prescriptive Teaching
Reading
Mathematics
Juvenile Delinquency
Social Disorganization
Curriculum Design
Criminology
Law Enforcement and Corrections
Police, Probation, and Parole
Drug Abuse
Counseling
Crisis Intervention
Urban Problems
Community Relations
Family Counseling

This model, while ambitious, should result in considerable impact in a variety of ways:

the development of a new professional credential;

the development of new and possibly attractive programs leading to the profession;

the expansion of the traditional teaching role;

help provided for students previously ignored or pressured out of the school situation;

recognition of the widening sphere of influence of the school into the community;

increased understanding of the work of the educator by external agencies which also deal with the disruptive youth; and

increased contact between these agencies and the school.

Program Description--Model B

This in-service model, while less ambitious than Model A, may have greater attraction to educational administrators in the field. It is cheaper, involves personnel already employed, and is more limited in scope, but, while dealing with the same general competencies, obviously will not result in as highly trained specialists.

It is suggested that between three and five target school districts be identified by the State Education Agency. In each of these school districts a cadre of 10 to 15 teachers should be identified, who possess the characteristics outlined under Model A. These teachers should already have exhibited an affinity for and/or special skill in dealing with disruptive youth. (It might be noted that these skills should NOT be punitive in nature.) They should have the in-service training program explained to them and then have the option to enroll on a volunteer basis.

The suggested model is 10 months in length. In-service seminars in the three general areas of Diagnostic and Remedial Teaching, Learning Disabilities, and Crisis Intervention would be held on a weekly basis. If after-school time is demanded, appropriate compensation should be allocated. The in-service instructors should be available to act as consultant/resource personnel. The cadre of teachers would be assigned a caseload of students

identified by commonly accepted and clearly defined procedures; it should rarely exceed 20 students. These students will be helped in any way deemed appropriate by the teacher to whom he is assigned. It is suggested that this model be coordinated with, and be parallel to, the programs for disruptive students being developed by other consultants. Such teachers may be assigned as specialists to those crisis-intervention duties as outlined in the objectives.

The skills developed during the training programs should be practical and specific and should include, although not be limited to:

use of specific diagnostic tests in the area of reading and mathematics, e.g., the Individual Reading Inventory, Woodcock Reading Inventory Test (PIAT), the Key Math Test;

interpretation of psychological test results, including the Wechsler and Stanford-Binet;

writing of clear and manageable prescriptions to intervene in the learning disabilities identified;

ability to deal with crises of differing kinds, including the crisis of anger, the crisis of emotional upset, etc.;

ability to differentiate between various kinds of crises, including those that involve group dynamics;

ability to deal with the immediate crisis, as opposed to events in the past which may have initiated the crisis but not be at issue at the time;

ability to initiate at least temporary but specific steps to resolve the crisis;

ability to deal with aggressive, assaultive behaviors;

an understanding of family dynamics and their influence upon in-school behavior;

knowledge of ethnic, racial, and cultural factors;

a realistic and effective referral process;

a thorough knowledge of local agencies, their missions, their personnel, and the relative strengths and weaknesses of both;

the ability to structure learning situations in a non-threatening yet clearly defined fashion; and

thorough knowledge of drug- and alcohol-abuse information.

These skills are probably best acquired in practical situations which can be observed and analyzed later. However, the use of role-playing, case studies, and video- and audio-taping of real and "theatrical" incidents and problems help in the development of skills critical to dealing with the alienated, hostile student. The transcription and self-analysis and rationalization of such tapings are also helpful.

The roles of such teachers in the schools has, in the authors' experience, been dependent upon the needs of the community and upon the perceptions of the school administrator and faculty. However, the roles seem to fall into the following categories.

The Crisis-Intervention Teacher

In this role the teacher is actually a referral agent within the school, at the call of other teachers or administrators. This assumes that the crisis does not require punitive measures. The teacher in this role will usually initiate temporary crisis-intervention skills, including academic tutoring and remedial help. In schools where teachers have been used in this role, their functions have also included liaison work with other community agencies and with families. The establishment of the credibility of this role has, in several instances, resulted in the crisis-intervention teacher being used as a referral by police, probation officers, and the juvenile court judge. The dangers involved here seem to be a confusion of roles with the school counselor, the possibility of intrafaculty conflict, and the mistaken assumption that any child with any problem can be referred, resulting in overburdening the crisis-intervention teacher. An effective caseload for one teacher appears to be 20. Because of the severity of the cases and the crisis this is not low.

The Alternative School Teacher

The increasing trend toward establishing separate programs or classes for disruptive students has led to the need for teachers with diagnostic and remedial capabilities

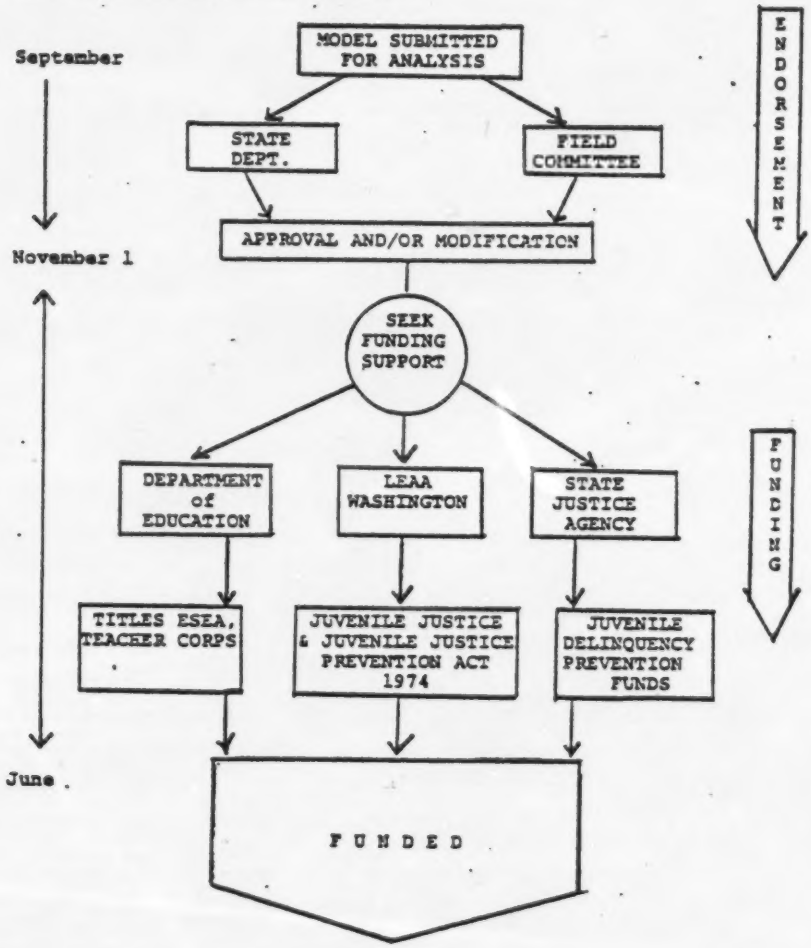
who can initiate flexible and multilevel instructional units in a variety of subject areas. The need to deal with conflict between individuals and groups is often increased in such self-contained and isolated units.

The "Ombudsman" Role

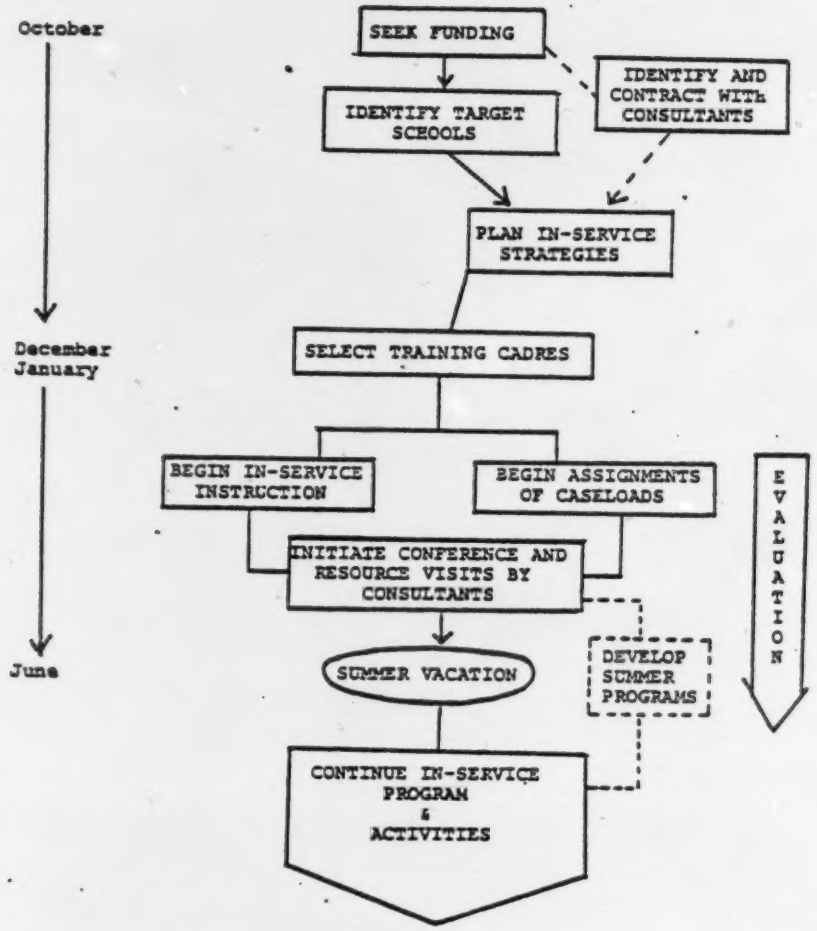
This role is not as readily accepted as the previous, more common, roles. Essentially the teacher becomes an independent advocate for the student, operating within the school and with all the sanctions of the school. The students are all self-referred, bringing all kinds of both academic and personal problems. These can range from trivial to serious. The "ombudsman" can use the resources of the school and the community to initiate help. There can be several problems with this role, similar to those of the crisis-intervention teacher; however, there are some which are unique. The very nature of the role lends itself to uncertainty. It is hard to maintain an independent and credible stance in the eyes of all the constituency of the school. The isolation from faculty and administration necessary in the role causes increased frustration. The lack of any effective way of controlling referrals often results in burdening the teacher with too many problems, many of them trivial, but the ombudsman's credibility in the eyes of the clientele is dependent upon a willingness to deal with them.

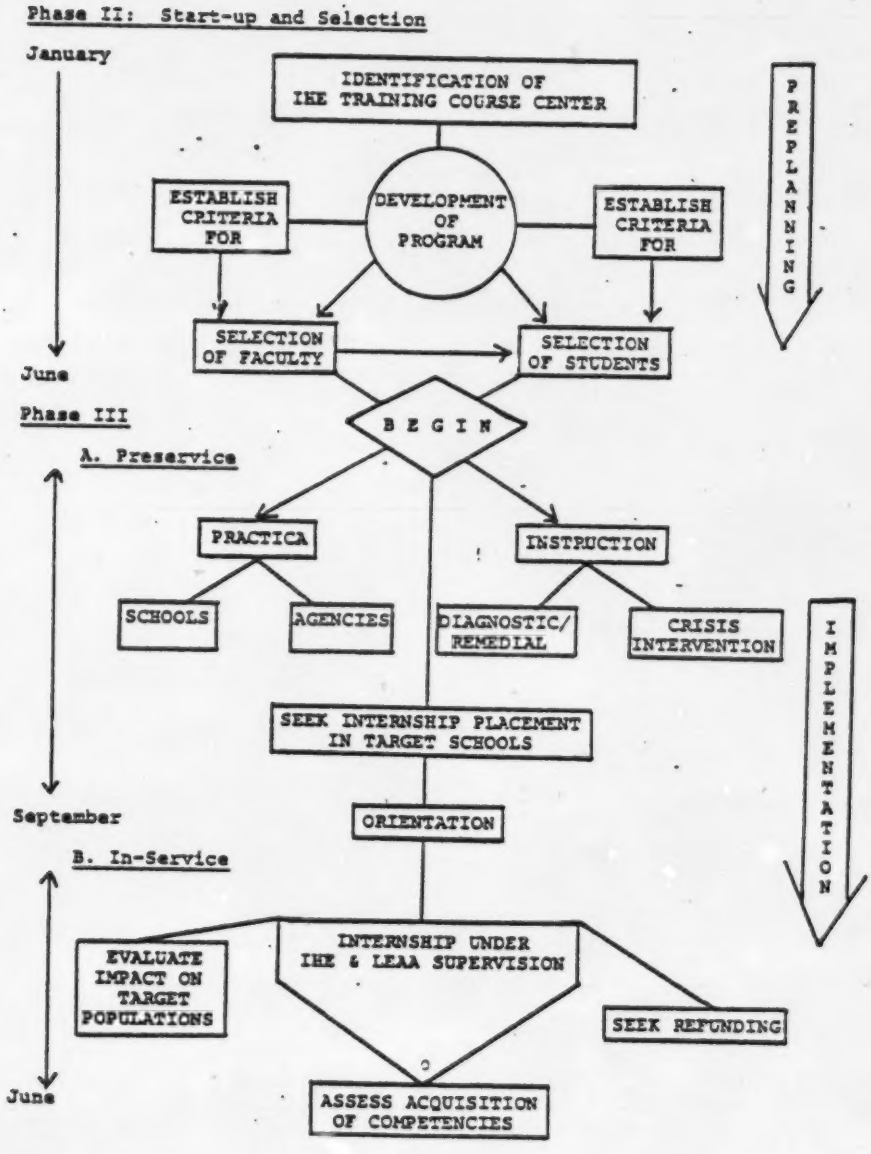
Implementation Plan--Model A

Phase I: Approval and Funding



Implementation Plan--Model B




Phase II: Start-up and Selection
January
IDENTIFICATION OF THE TRAINING COURSE CENTER
PREPLANNING
ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR
DEVELOPMENT OF PROGRAM
ESTABLISH CRITERIA FOR
SELECTION OF FACULTY
SELECTION OF STUDENTS
June
Phase III
B E G I N
A. Preservice
PRACTICA
INSTRUCTION
SCHOOLS
AGENCIES
DIAGNOSTIC/ REMEDIAL
CRISIS INTERVENTION
IMPLEMENTATION
SEEK INTERNSHIP PLACEMENT IN TARGET SCHOOLS
September
ORIENTATION
B. In-Service
EVALUATE IMPACT ON TARGET POPULATIONS
INTERNSHIP UNDER IHE & LEAA SUPERVISION
SEEK REFUNDING
June
ASSESS ACQUISITION OF COMPETENCIES

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